



3

ATARI FORCE



ATARI FORCE

CREATED AND WRITTEN BY:
GERRY CONWAY & ROY THOMAS

VISUAL CONCEPTS:
ROSS ANDRU

ART:

GIL KANE

DICK GIORDANO

MIKE DECARLO

DESIGN:

NEAL POZNER

LETTERING:

JOHN COSTANZA

COLORING:

ADRIENNE ROY

EDITOR:

DICK GIORDANO

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CONSIDER THEM CLOCKWISE, THESE BRAVEST OF A FUTURE EARTH'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS:
MARTIN CHAMPION--MISSION COMMANDER.
MOHANDAS SINGH--FLIGHT ENGINEER.
LUCAS ORION--MEDICAL OFFICER.
LISAN O'ROURKE--SECURITY OFFICER.
LYDIA PEREZ--PILOT, EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

ATARI FORCE™





--THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL WARP-
DRIVE CRUISER WHICH PROPELS THESE
FIVE SKILLED AND DEDICATED DAREDEVILS
THROUGH LAYER UPON LAYER OF
ALTERNATE REALITIES.

A BILLION BILLION UNIVERSES, IMPAIRED
LIKE SHINING PEARLS ON AN INVISIBLE
STRING, EACH EXISTING AN INFINITESIMAL
HEARTBEAT FROM THE NEXT.

YOU'RE RIGHT, LUCAS.
IT *IS* HARD TO ACCEPT
THE FACT THAT WE'RE
ACTUALLY TRAVELING
BETWEEN REALITIES--
PASSING FROM ONE
COSMOS TO ANOTHER!

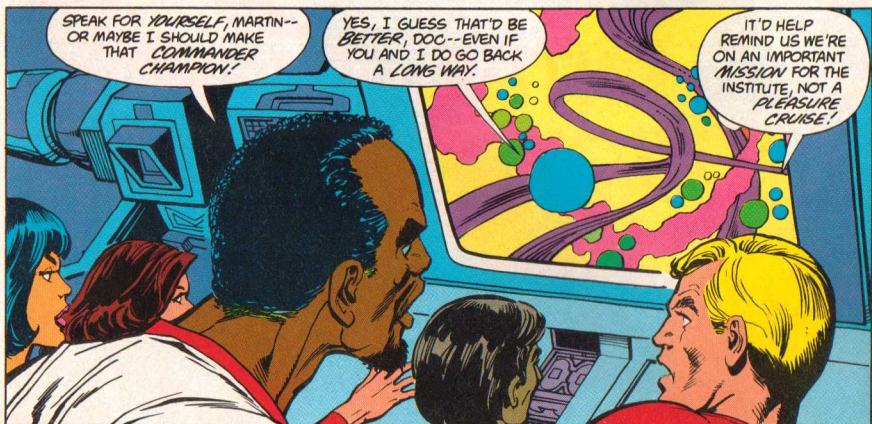
AFTER ALL, JUST A
COUPLE OF DECADES BACK,
THIS KIND OF THING HAPPENED
ONLY IN MOVIES WHICH
HAD GONE OVERBOARD ON
SPECIAL EFFECTS--

--AND NOW HERE WE
ARE, AND ALL WE CAN
THINK OF IS GETTING
THROUGH IT, SO WE
CAN GET ON WITH
BUSINESS!

CHAPTER ONE:

ENTER--THE DARK DESTROYER!





SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, MARTIN--
OR MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE
THAT **COMMANDER
CHAMPION!**

YES, I GUESS THAT'D BE
BETTER, DOC-- EVEN IF
YOU AND I DO GO BACK
A LONG WAY.

IT'D HELP
REMINDE US WE'RE
ON AN IMPORTANT
MISSION FOR THE
INSTITUTE, NOT A
**PLEASURE
CRUISE!**



FINE BY **ME--** BUT ALL THIS
STILL GIVES ME THE **WEIRDEST**
FEELING I'VE HAD SINCE I WAS
A BOY BACK IN **DETROIT.**

I DON'T KNOW--IT'S
ALMOST **RELIGIOUS,**
SOMEHOW--

--LIKE SEEING THE
HAND OF GOD,
WITH THE STARS
SLIPPING THROUGH
HIS FINGERS LIKE
SO MUCH **DUST.**



FUNNY! I LOOK OUT
THERE, AND ALL I THINK
OF IS **FUNDAMENTAL
QUANTUM PHYSICS.**

WE'VE ENTERED THE
THEORETICAL **TACHYON
STREAM,** WHERE NOTHING
CAN MOVE **SLOWER** THAN
LIGHT--THAT'S ALL!

YOU KNOW,
YOU **INTEREST**
ME, PEREZ...



SOMEWHERE **BENEATH**
THAT COLD EXTERIOR,
I'M ALMOST POSITIVE
THERE'S WHAT
THEY USED TO
CALL A **WARM** AND
WONDERFUL
HUMAN BEING.

I'VE GOT TO
REMEMBER TO
THERMO-BLAST
FOR IT. WHEN WE
GET BACK
HOME.

/F WE GET
HOME, **COMMANDER**
--REPEAT, **/F--**



--AND RIGHT NOW,
WITH ALL THE *STRESS*
FACTORS OUR SHIP
IS UNDERGOING IN
OUR LITTLE *HYPER-*
SPACE HOP--

--I'D SAY THAT
WAS SHAPING UP
AS A MIGHTY
SIZABLE
CONJUNCTION!

PERHAPS, MS. PEREZ!
STILL, MY OBSERVATIONS
CONVINCE ME THE SHIP'S
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING
IS QUITE *SOUND*.

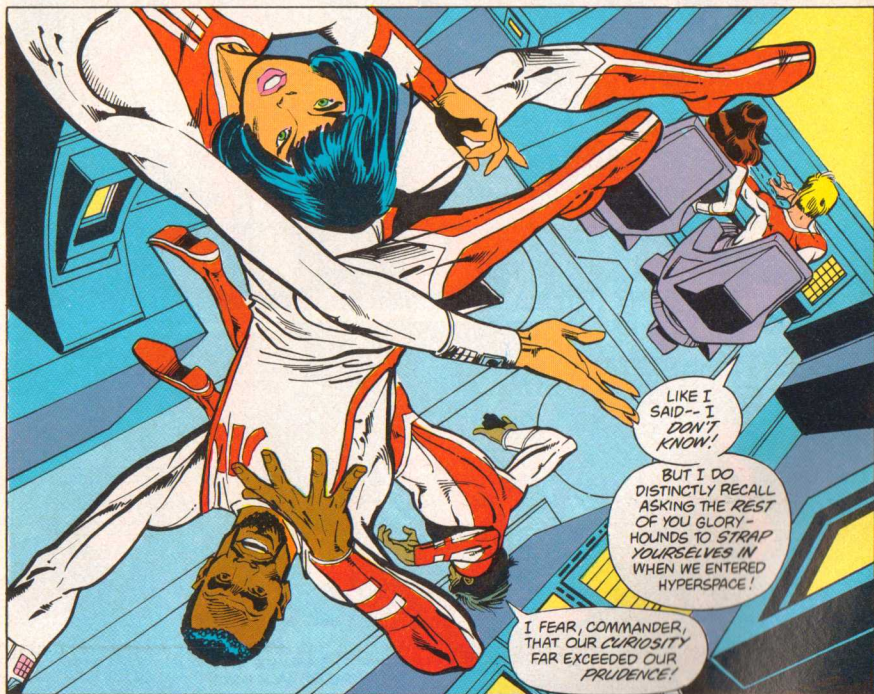
ELSE, WE WOULD HARDLY
HAVE BEEN SENT UPON
THIS QUEST FOR *PARALLEL*
WORLDS WITH NATURAL
RESOURCES TO AUGMENT
OUR OWN.

THAT'S QUITE A
MOUTHFUL,
LADDIE...

...THOUGH I NOTICED
THAT *YOU* WERE AFTER
DOING A BIT OF STARING,
AS WELL!

I WAS MUSING ON HOW THIS
SUPPORTS MY *VEDIC PHILOSO-*
PHY... OF A SUCCESSION OF
WORLDS AND COUNTLESS
REINCARNATIONS.

MAYBE WE'LL FIND *MORE* ON THIS
JAUNT THAN THE ANSWER TO A FEW
SHORTAGES BACK HOME.





O'ROURKE!
YOU'RE THE
OLYMPIC ATHLETE
OF THIS LITTLE
GROUPING.

THINK YOU CAN *STEAP*
MOHANDAS, BEFORE HE
GOES *SPLAT* ALL OVER
OUR NICE SHINY
COMPUTER
COMPONENTS?

SURE AND WHAT
KIND OF SECURITY
OFFICER WOULD I BE
NOW IF I COULDN'T?

BUT--
DOCTOR
ORION--

--LUCKED OUT
ON HIS OWN,
THANKS!

BUT, MARTIN--
COMMANDER--
WHAT'S GOING
ON OUT THERE?

IT FELT AS IF
SOMETHING JUST
REACHED OUT AND
GRABBED
SCANNER ONE!

THAT'S
JUST IT,
DOC!


SOMETHING
DID--



EVEN AS COMMANDER CHAMPION
CRIES OUT IN SURPRISE, THE
ATARI INSTITUTE COSMO-CRAFT
COMES ABRUPTLY TO A DEAD STOP--

--BUT I'LL BE
HANGED IF I'VE
GOT THE SLIGHTEST
IDEA WHAT IT IS!

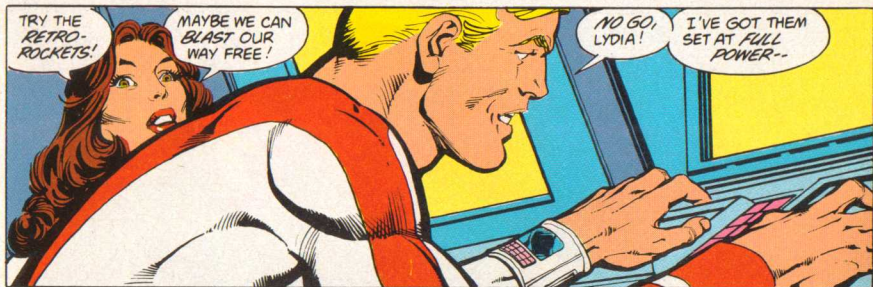
--IN AN EERIE SECTOR
OF DIMENSIONAL SPACE
WHERE A VAST **BLACK**
NEBULA SEEMS TO BLOT
OUT STARS, PLANETS,
AND ALL OTHER PHYSICAL
PHENOMENA!

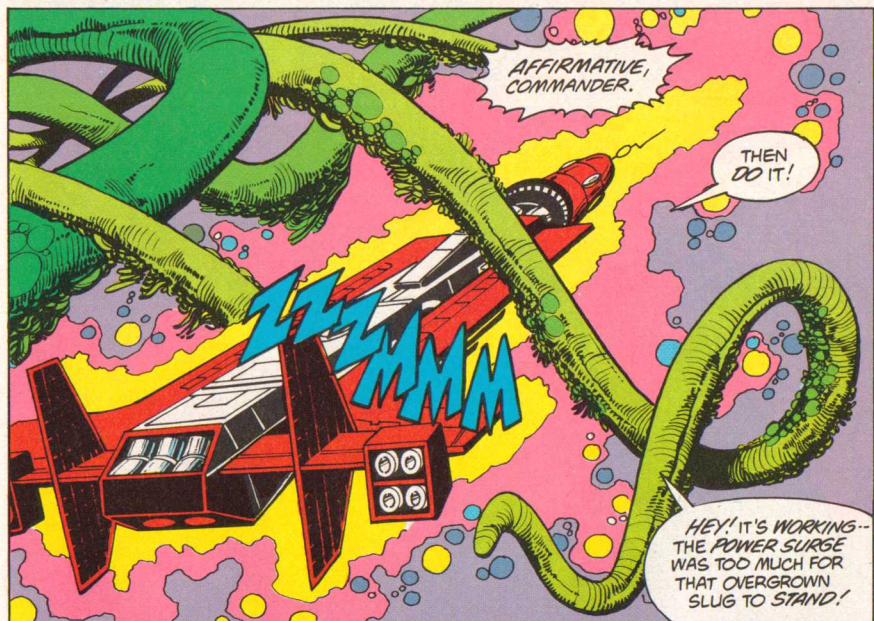
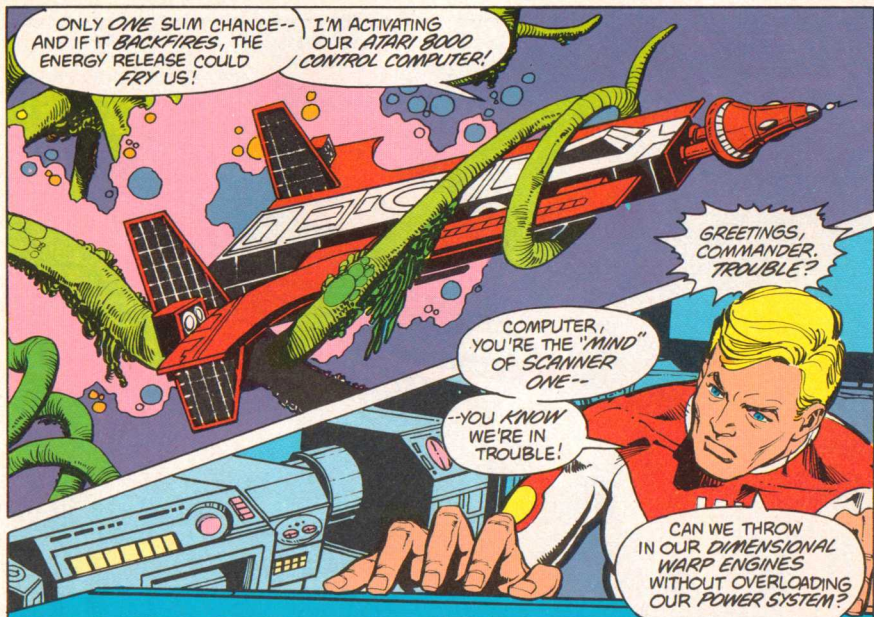


HITTING THE *OUTSIDE VIEWER* BUTTON, HE SEES THAT THE SHIP HAS BEEN SEIZED BY A MONSTROUS, WORLD-DWARFING TENTACLE--

--NOR IS IT THE ONLY SUCH TENDRIL WHICH REACHES FOR SCANNER ONE FROM THE VERY *HEART* OF THE DARK, FORBIDDING NEBULA!

AND *WITHIN* THAT CLOUD OF GAS AND DUST: A SPREADING RED STELLAR GLOW WHICH RESEMBLES NOTHING SO MUCH AS A HUGE AND ANGRY EYE!





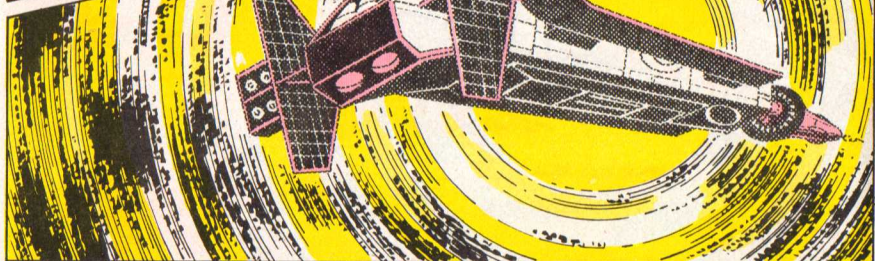


CHAMPION,
WE'VE BROKEN
FREE!

THERE'S JUST
ONE SMALL
PROBLEM!

WITH THE *DIMENSIONAL*
WARP ENGINE
RUNNING AT *FULL*
POWER, WE CAN'T CONTROL
OUR FLIGHT THROUGH
THE *MULTIVERSE*!

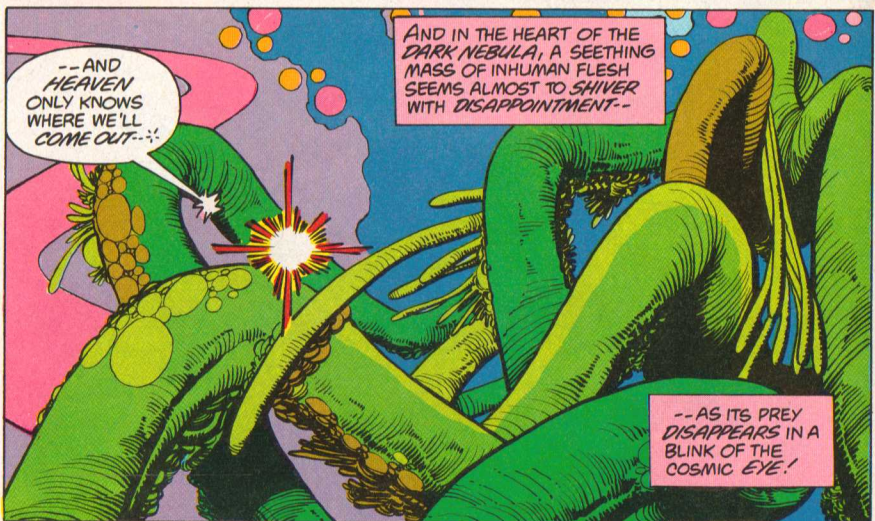
WE'RE
VANISHING
INTO THE
SPACE-TIME
STREAM--



--AND
HEAVEN
ONLY KNOWS
WHERE WE'LL
COME OUT--

AND IN THE HEART OF THE
DARK NEBULA, A SEETHING
MASS OF INHUMAN FLESH
SEEMS ALMOST TO SHIVER
WITH *DISAPPOINTMENT*--

--AS ITS PREY
DISAPPEARS IN A
BLINK OF THE
COSMIC EYE!



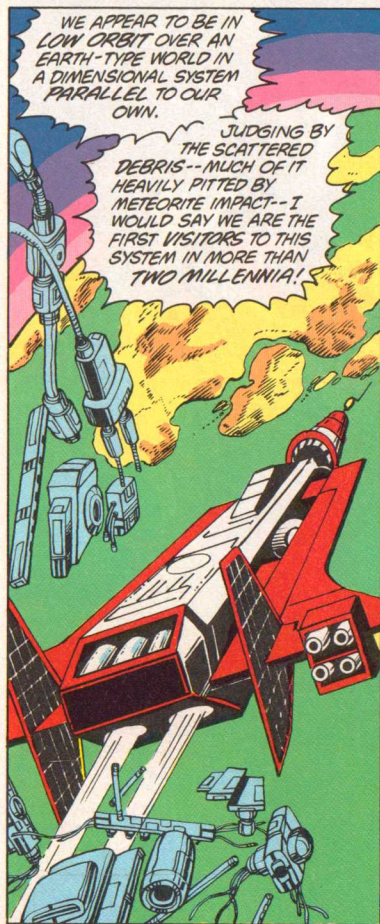
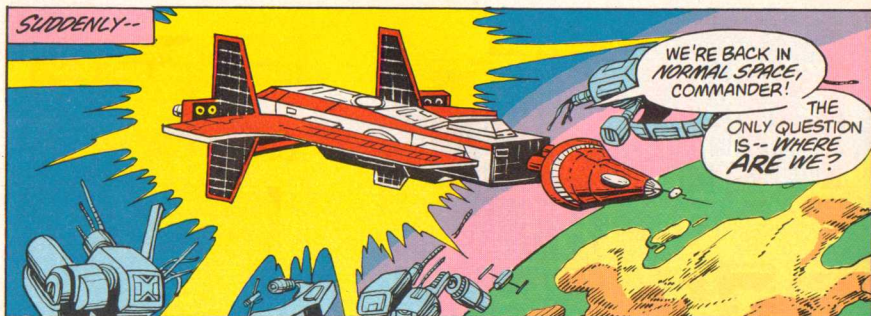
CHAPTER TWO:

PLANET OF THE DOOMED!

FOR MORE CENTURIES THAN HUMANKIND HAS BEEN CIVILIZED, THIS ONCE - FERTILE WORLD IN A STAR - SYSTEM NOT UNLIKE OUR OWN HAS LAIN FALLOW AND BARREN...

...ITS SKIES A JUNKYARD OF ANCIENT, CRUMBLING SATELLITES...

...A SARGASSO SEA OF BROKEN DREAMS!





--OR WE FACE TOTAL
DISASTER!

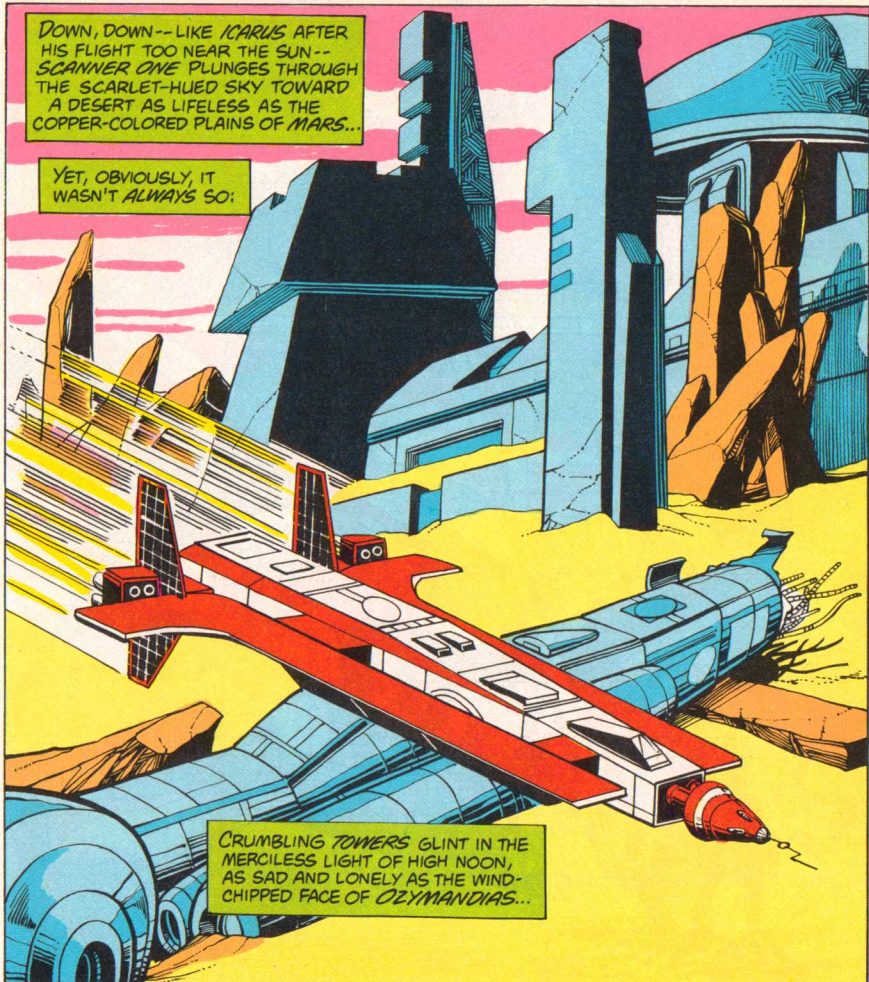
YOU'RE THE
PILOT, LYDIA.

TAKE US
DOWN-- SHE'S
ALL YOURS!

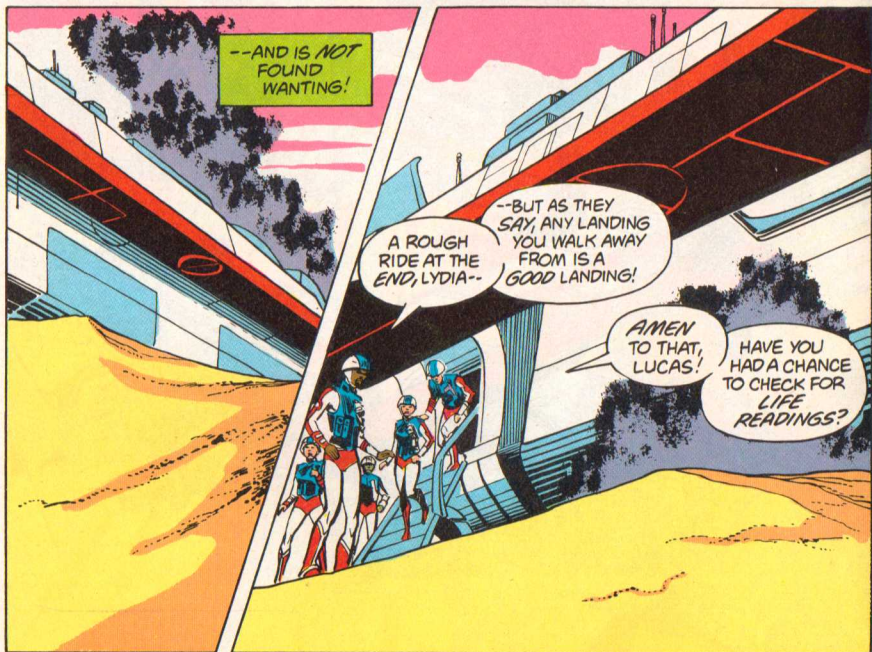
AYE-AYE,
COMMANDER.
LANDING
SEQUENCE
INITIATED.

DOWN, DOWN-- LIKE ICARUS AFTER
HIS FLIGHT TOO NEAR THE SUN--
SCANNER ONE PLUNGES THROUGH
THE SCARLET-HUED SKY TOWARD
A DESERT AS LIFELESS AS THE
COPPER-COLORED PLAINS OF MARS...

YET, OBVIOUSLY, IT
WASN'T ALWAYS SO:



CRUMBLING TOWERS GLINT IN THE
MERCILESS LIGHT OF HIGH NOON,
AS SAD AND LONELY AS THE WIND-
CHIPPED FACE OF OZYMANDIAS...



I'VE DONE NOTHING *BUT* CHECK SINCE WE *ARRIVED*, MARTIN.

USING THE *WRIST-COMP* COMMUNICATIONS LINK TO OUR *ATARI 8000 COMPUTER* BACK ON BOARD SCANNER ONE, I'VE ORDERED OUR MAIN SENSORS TO SWEEP THIS ENTIRE *HEMISPHERE--*

--BUT I'M AFRAID THESE *RUINS* ALREADY TELL THE TALE:

THERE'S ABSOLUTELY *NO SIGN* OF LIFE ON THE SURFACE OF THIS WORLD!

WHAT A TRAGEDY-- TO COME SO FAR, ACROSS SO MANY DIMENSIONS--

--ONLY TO FIND A *GRAVEYARD* AT OUR FIRST--

EH?

YOU SAID THERE WAS NO LIFE ON THE SURFACE, LUCAS!

BUT WHAT ABOUT *UNDERGROUND*?

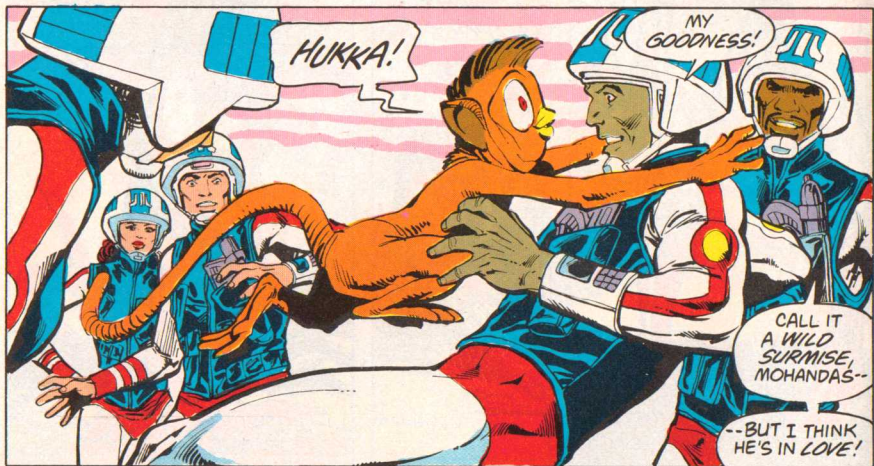
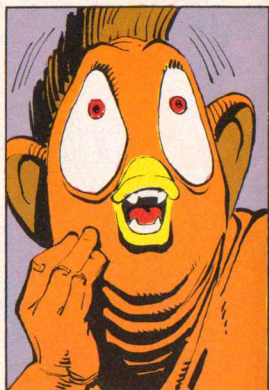
CRRRUMMMBBLE

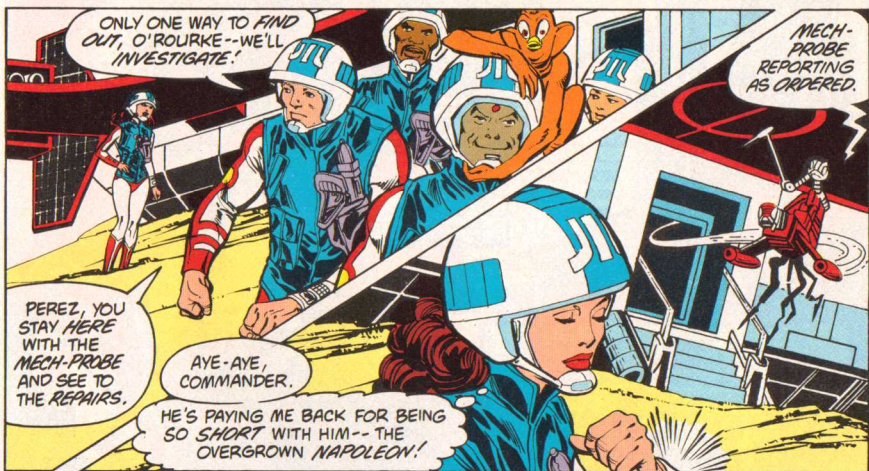
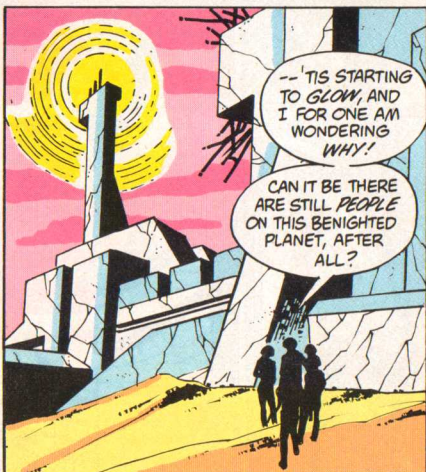
GOOD LORD! WHAT'S THAT?

POK!

HUKKA?

HUKKA-HUKKA?



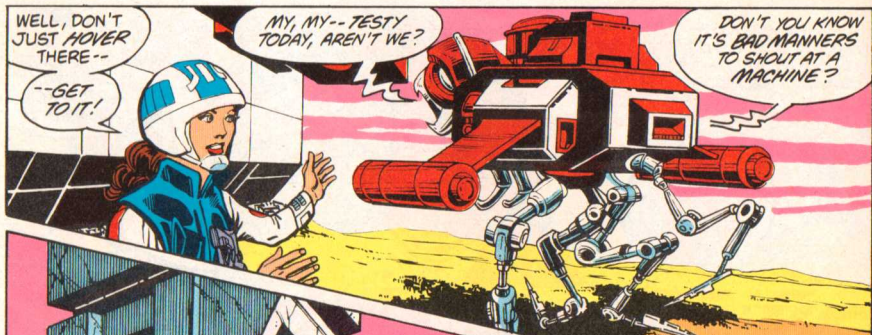


WELL, DON'T
JUST HOVER
THERE--

--GET
TO IT!

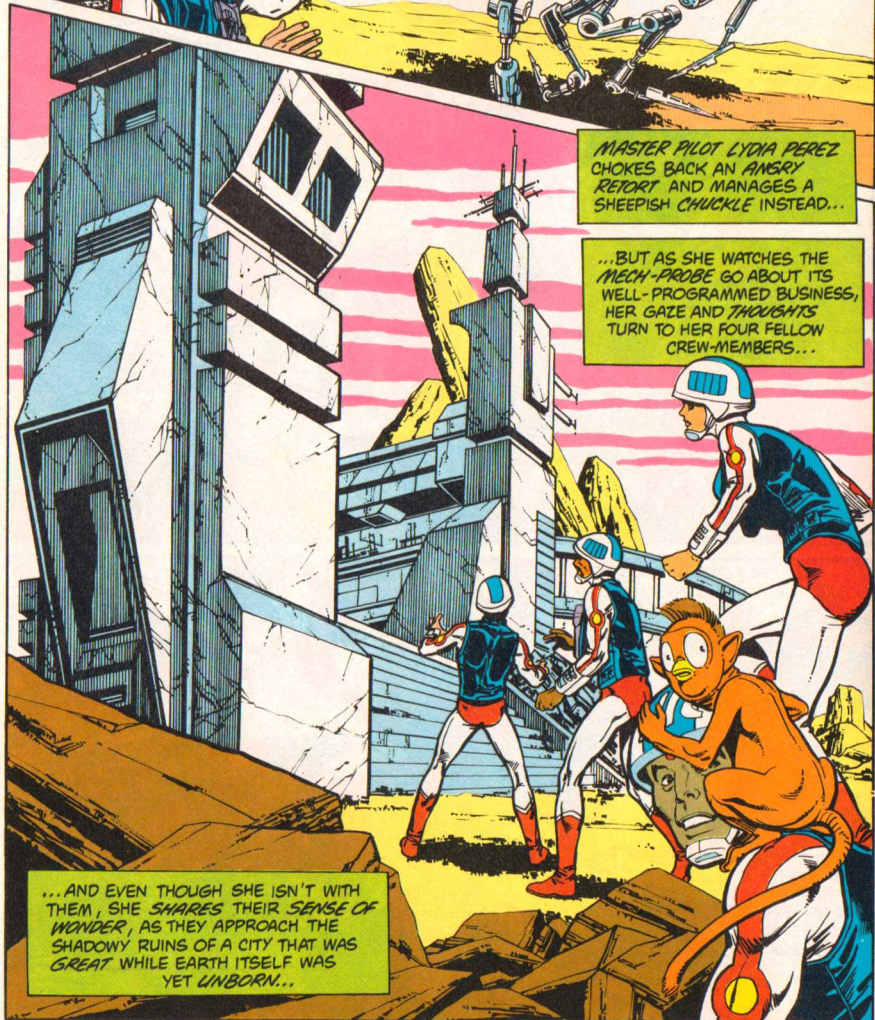
MY, MY-- TESTY
TODAY, AREN'T WE?

DON'T YOU KNOW
IT'S BAD MANNERS
TO SHOUT AT A
MACHINE?



MASTER PILOT LYDIA PEREZ
CHOKES BACK AN ANGRY
RETOUR AND MANAGES A
SHEEPISH CHUCKLE INSTEAD...

...BUT AS SHE WATCHES THE
MECH-PROBE GO ABOUT ITS
WELL-PROGRAMMED BUSINESS,
HER GAZE AND THOUGHTS
TURN TO HER FOUR FELLOW
CREWMEMBERS...



...AND EVEN THOUGH SHE ISN'T WITH
THEM, SHE SHARES THEIR SENSE OF
WONDER, AS THEY APPROACH THE
SHADOWY RUINS OF A CITY THAT WAS
GREAT WHILE EARTH ITSELF WAS
YET UNBORN...



THE ATARI 8000 HAS
SCANNED THESE
STRUCTURES, MARTIN--

--AND
ESTIMATES
THEIR AGE
AT WELL OVER
15 BILLION
YEARS!



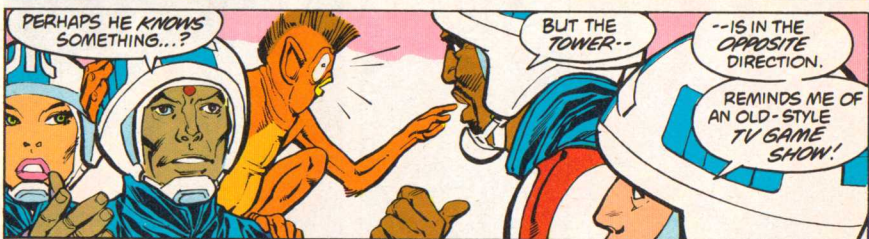
YOU'RE
JOKING!

NOTHING'S
THAT OLD--
IT'S INCREDIBLE!

HUKKA!

HUKKA-
HUKKA!

MY LITTLE FRIEND
WANTS US TO GO THAT
WAY, MY COMMANDER.



PERHAPS HE KNOWS
SOMETHING...?

BUT THE
TOWER--

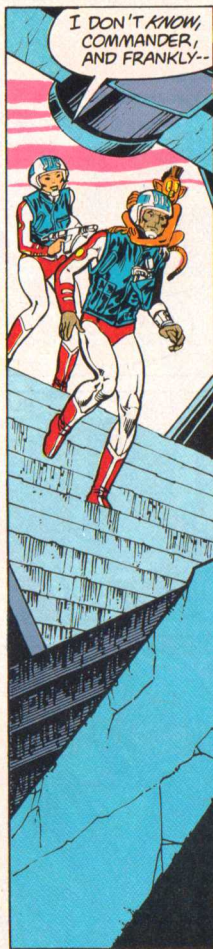
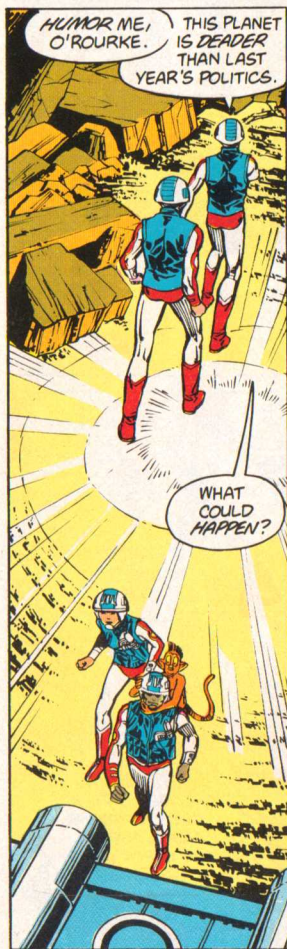
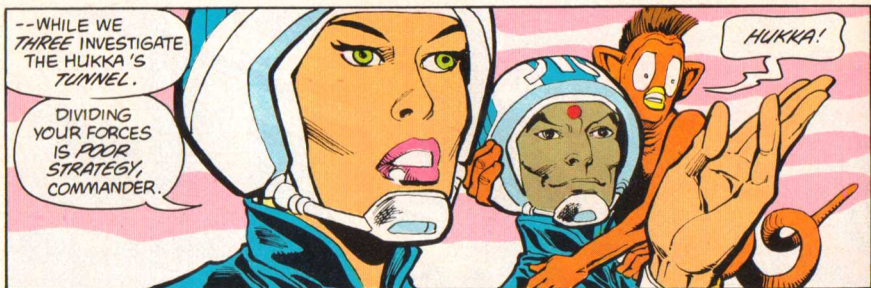
--IS IN THE
OPPOSITE
DIRECTION.

REMINDS ME OF
AN OLD-STYLE
TV GAME
SHOW!



"PICK CURTAIN NUMBER
ONE, NUMBER TWO,
OR NUMBER THREE!"

BUT WE CAN
CHOOSE TO PICK
TWO "CURTAINS"--
LUCAS AND I
WILL CHECK OUT
THE TOWER--



DOWN, DOWN, DOWN INTO
UTTER DARKNESS THEY CLIMB,
LIGHTING THEIR WAY WITH A
WEAPONS-LASER SET AT
LOW ON A WIDE BEAM...

FOOTSTEPS
ECHO FROM
UNSEEN WALLS,
AND SOME-
WHERE IN THE
FATHOMLESS
SHADOWS,
WATER DRIPS
FROM AN
ANCIENT
LEAK.

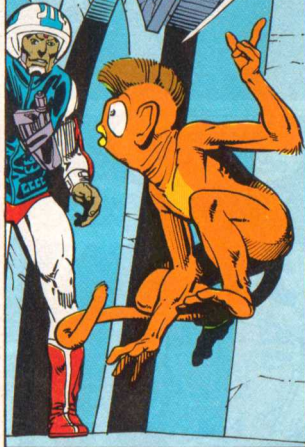
A DEAD
END!

YOUR PET'S
LED US ON
A MERRY
CHASE, FLIGHT
ENGINEER SINGH.
I HOPE HE'S
ENJOYED HIS
LITTLE JOKE
AT OUR
EXPENSE!

DON'T ALWAYS
EXPECT THE WORST,
O' ROURKE!

LOOK!

HUKKA!
HUKKA-
HUKKA!



THIS ISN'T A
DEAD END,
IT'S A
DOOR!

AND HE WANTS US
TO GO
THROUGH
IT--!

SET YOUR
LASER AT
MEDIUM
HOT!

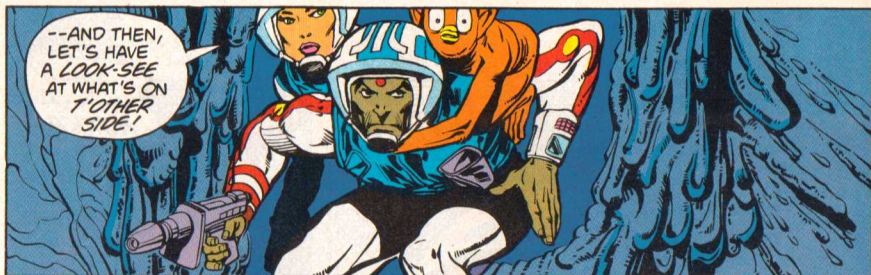
SURE AND
I'M A STEP
AHEAD OF YOU,
MOHANDAS!

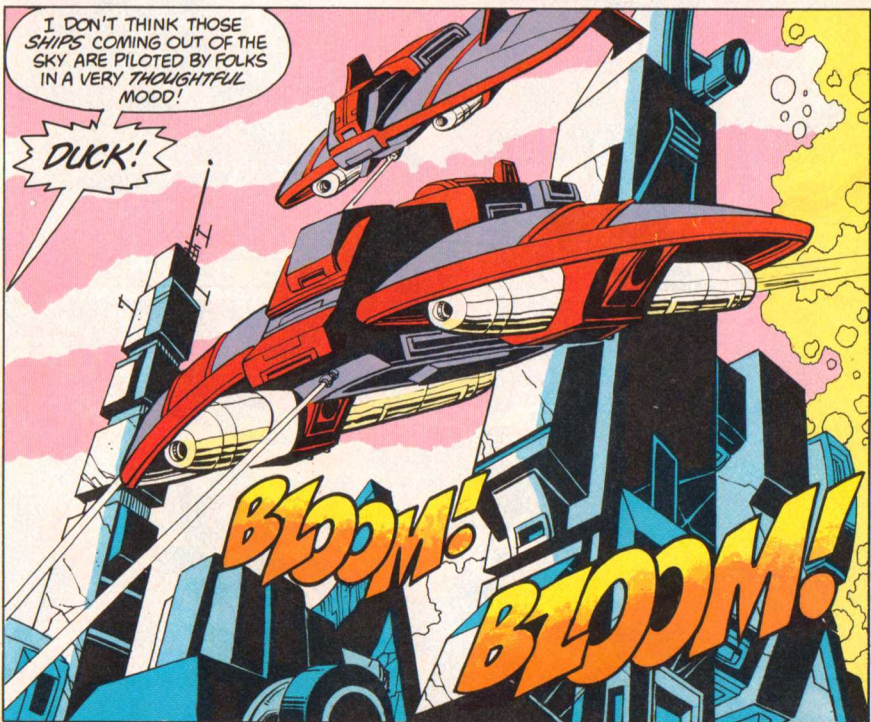
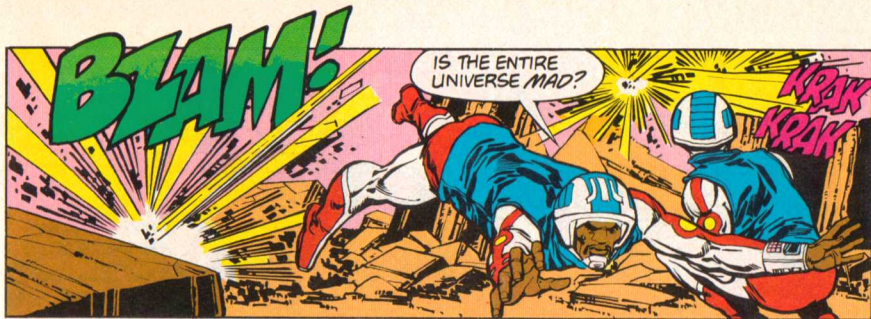
HSSSSSS

WE'RE
BURNING
THROUGH!

GIVE
IT A
MOMENT
TO COOL--

AT LAST, WHEN IT
SEEMS THEY'VE
BEEN DESCENDING
FOR HOURS,
THEY REACH--







WHOEVER THEY ARE, THEY COULD SURE USE A FEW LESSONS IN FRIENDLINESS!

WHAT SAY WE GIVE THEM A FEW POINTERS, EH, LUCAS?

USE VIOLENCE TO FIGHT VIOLENCE?

NO, MARTIN-- I SAW TOO MUCH OF THAT ON EARTH WHEN I SERVED WITH A UNITED NATIONS "PEACE-KEEPING FORCE"!!



WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT TAKING SIDES IN AN UGLY LITTLE THIRD WORLD CIVIL WAR, LUCAS--

--THIS IS A MATTER OF SURVIVAL!

MARTIN, MY FRIEND, I'M SORRY...

...BUT I'D RATHER DIE THAN FIGHT!

ZAM!

UH-HUH! YOU JUST MIGHT GET YOUR WISH, LUCAS!

THEY'VE GOT OUR RANGE, AT LAST--



SHWOOSH!!
WHOOOSH!!

--AND THEIR NEXT BLAST SHOULD--
HUH?

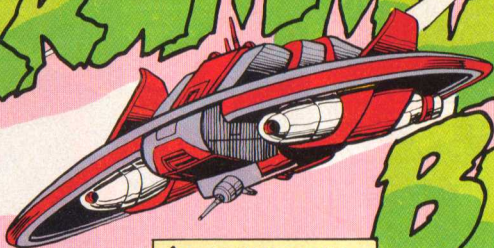
THEY'RE FLEEING! BUT WHY? WHAT COULD HAVE--

--

FOR ONE SPLIT SECOND
HIS HEART STANDS STILL,
AND MARTIN CHAMPION
IS STRUCK SPEECHLESS.

THEN HE FEELS
IT, EVEN AS HIS
EYES REGISTER
THE SCENE BEFORE
HIM:

RRRUMMMMM



AND HE SHARES THE
TERROR OF THE UN-
SEEN PILOTS IN THE
ATTACKING STARSHIPS,
AS A VOICE CRIES OUT,
A VOICE THAT HE KNOWS
IS HIS OWN:

THERE'S
SOMETHING
COMING UP
OUT OF THE
GROUND!

DEAR LORD,
IT'S A
SPACESHIP!

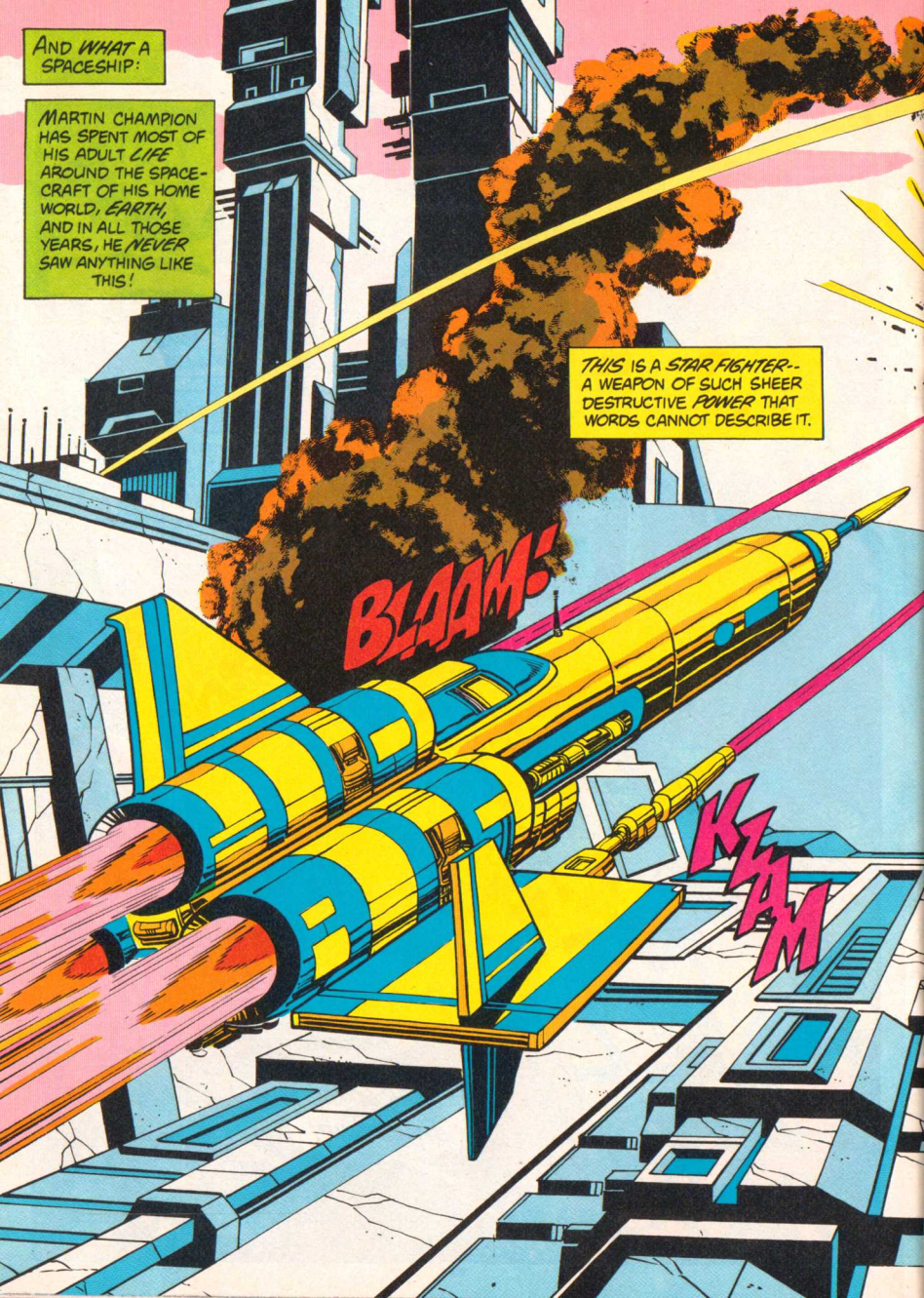
AND WHAT A
SPACESHIP:

MARTIN CHAMPION
HAS SPENT MOST OF
HIS ADULT LIFE
AROUND THE SPACE-
CRAFT OF HIS HOME
WORLD, EARTH,
AND IN ALL THOSE
YEARS, HE NEVER
SAW ANYTHING LIKE
THIS!

THIS IS A STAR FIGHTER--
A WEAPON OF SUCH SHEER
DESTRUCTIVE POWER THAT
WORDS CANNOT DESCRIBE IT.

BLAAM!

KLAM





KOOOM!

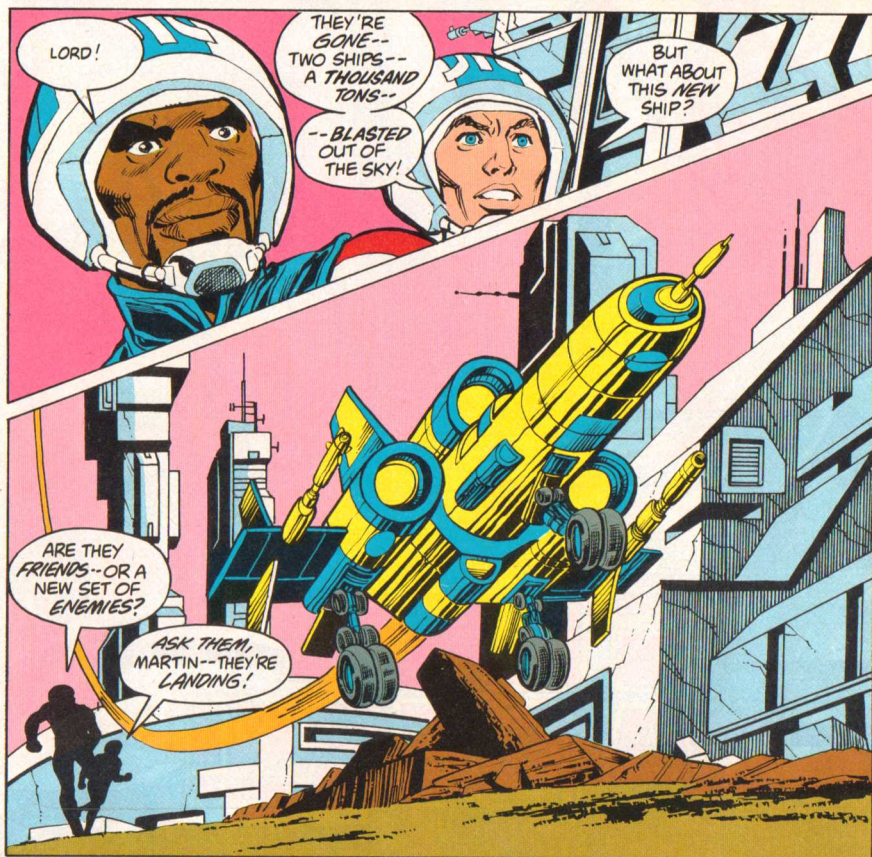
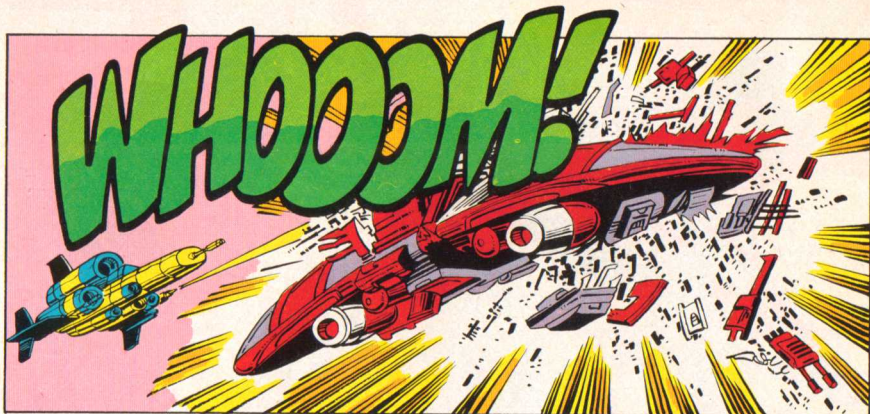
LIKE SOME ENORMOUS EAGLE TAKING FLIGHT AGAINST ITS PREY, THE STAR FIGHTER SHOOTS SKYWARD FROM THE SHATTERED DESERT FLOOR.

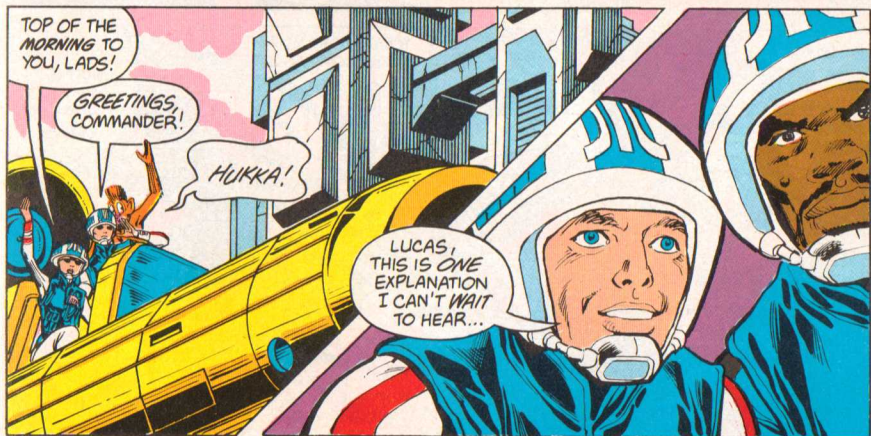
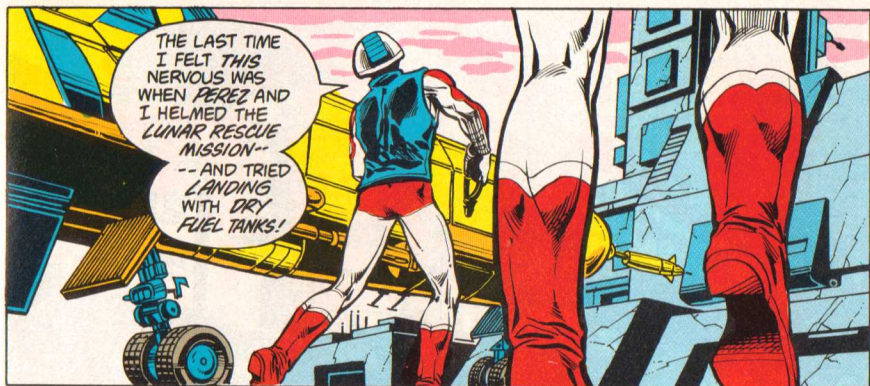
CHAMPION ALMOST FEELS SORRY FOR HIS ENEMIES.

ALMOST.

CHAPTER THREE:

STAR RAIDERS!

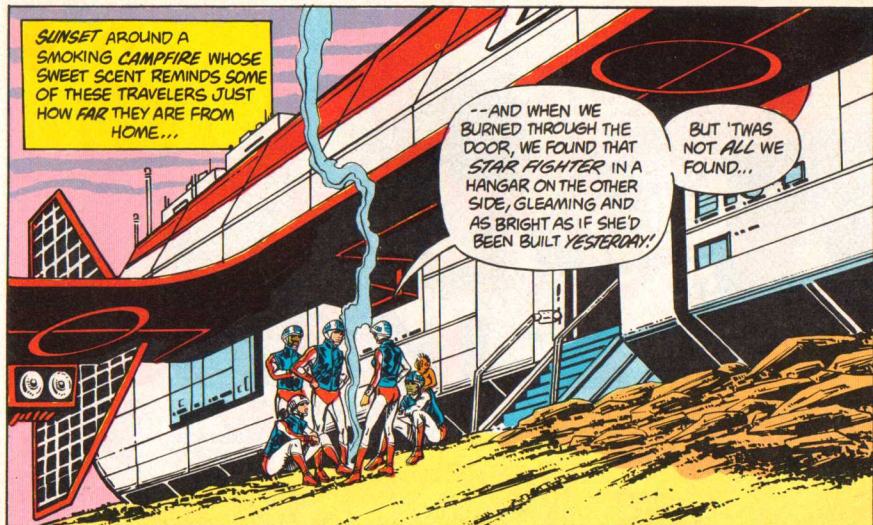




SUNSET AROUND A
SMOKING CAMPFIRE WHOSE
SWEET SCENT REMINDS SOME
OF THESE TRAVELERS JUST
HOW FAR THEY ARE FROM
HOME...

--AND WHEN WE
BURNED THROUGH THE
DOOR, WE FOUND THAT
STAR FIGHTER IN A
HANGAR ON THE OTHER
SIDE, GLEAMING AND
AS BRIGHT AS IF SHE'D
BEEN BUILT YESTERDAY!

BUT 'T WAS
NOT ALL WE
FOUND...



...AND IN TRUTH,
IT'S THIS LITTLE GEM
WHICH IS THE MORE
IMPORTANT FIND OF
THE TWO, I'M THINKING.

THE HUKKA LED
SINGH TO IT, AS SOON
AS WE BREACHED
THE DOOR.



A JEWEL?

WHAT'S SO
IMPORTANT
ABOUT--

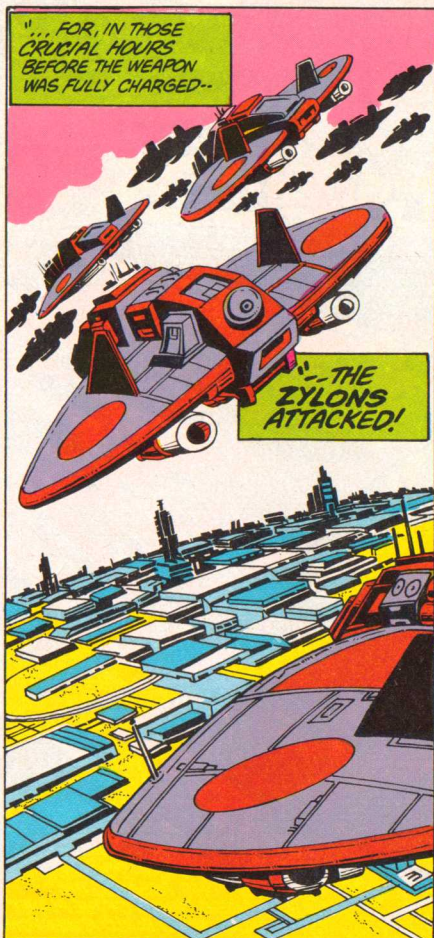
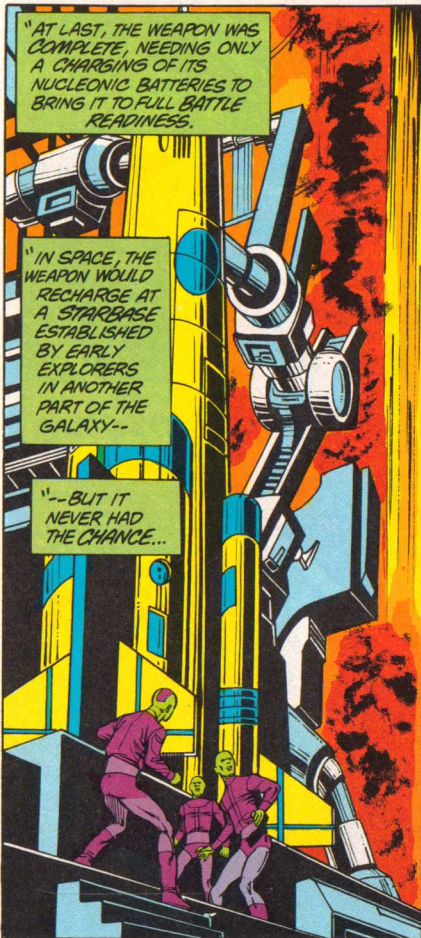
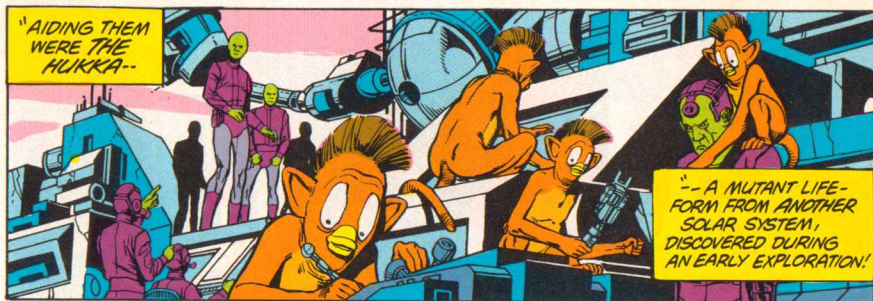
TOUCH IT TO YOUR
BROW, COMMANDER--

VISIONS...

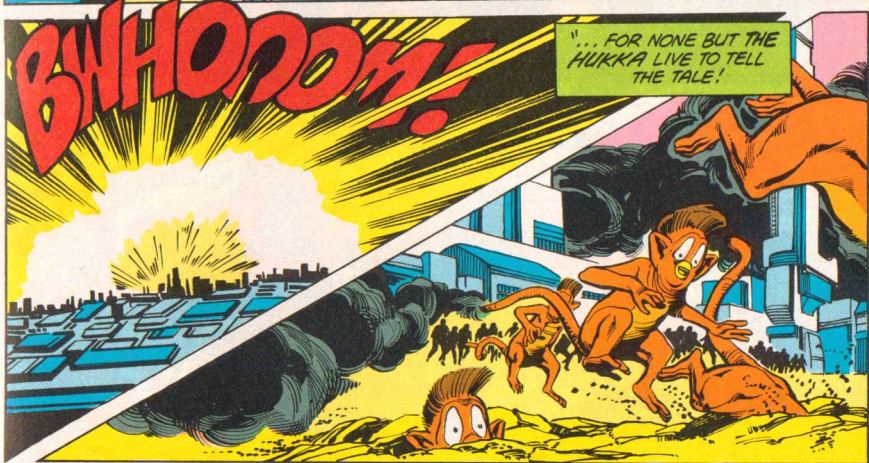
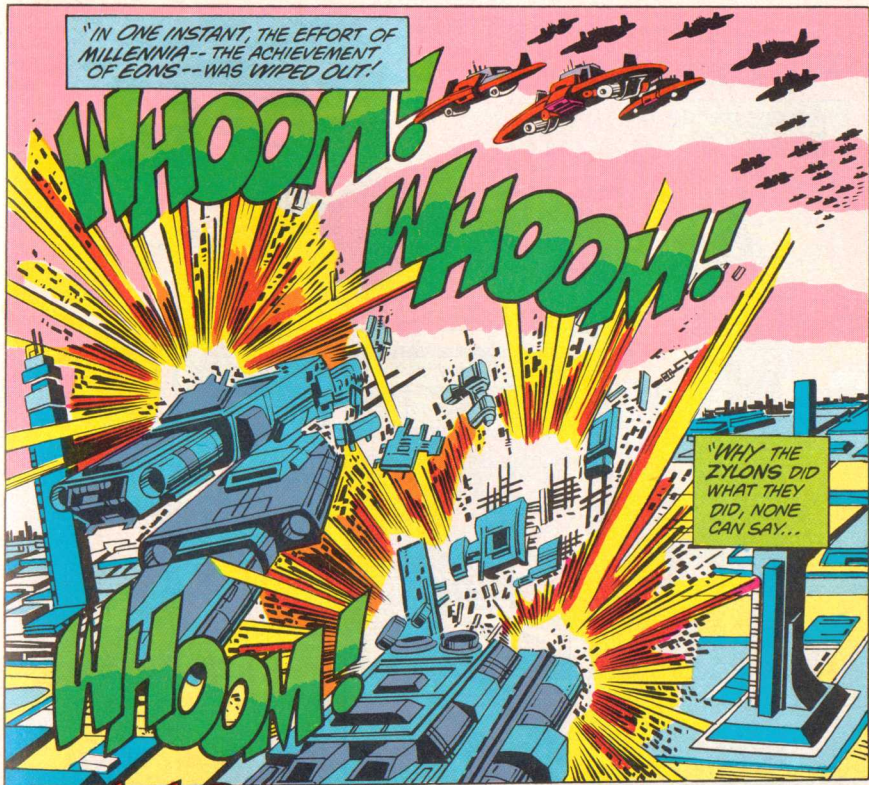
--AND
YOU'LL SEE
WHAT I
SAW WHEN
I PUT IT TO
MINE!

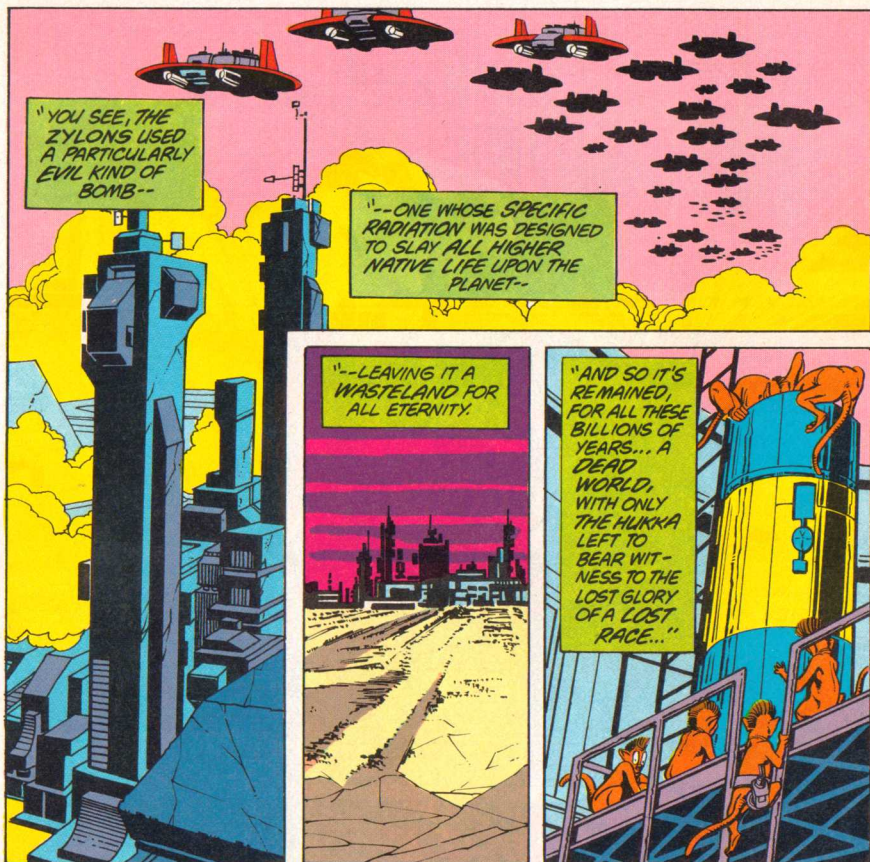


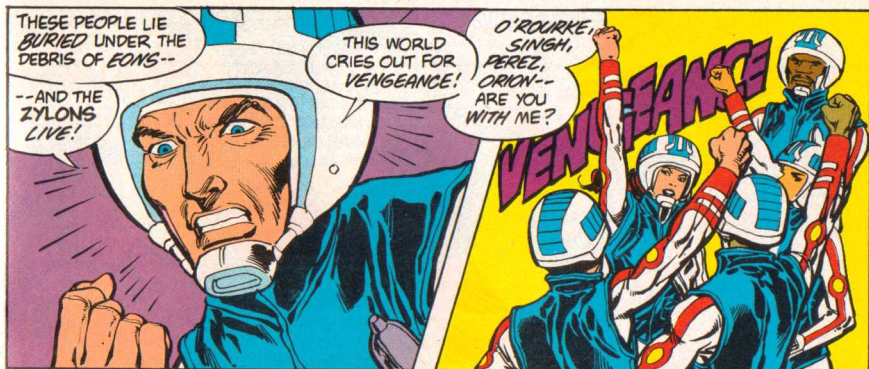




"IN ONE INSTANT, THE EFFORT OF
MILLENNIA-- THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF EONS-- WAS WIPE OUT!







THESE PEOPLE LIE
BURIED UNDER THE
DEBRIS OF EONS--

--AND THE
ZYLONS
LIVE!

THIS WORLD
CRIES OUT FOR
VENGEANCE!

O'ROURKE,
SINGH,
PEREZ,
ORON--
ARE YOU
WITH ME?

VENGEANCE



AND, IN THE RESULTING RUSH OF
ACTIVITY, NONE NOTICES THAT ONE
AMONG THEM HAS *NOT* SEALED
HIMSELF TO THEIR PACT...

...BUT, RATHER,
STANDS *BEWILDERED*,
AS IF SUDDENLY
FINDING HIMSELF
LOST AMONG
STRANGERS.



FORTY
MINUTES
LATER--

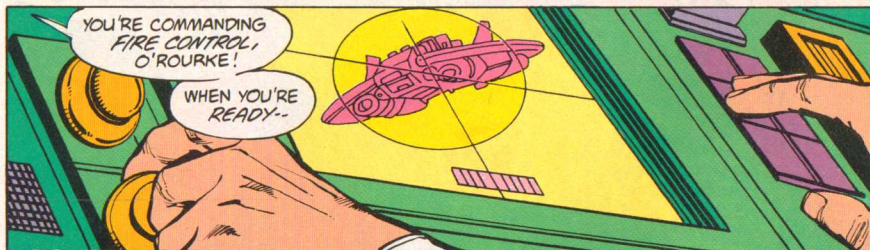
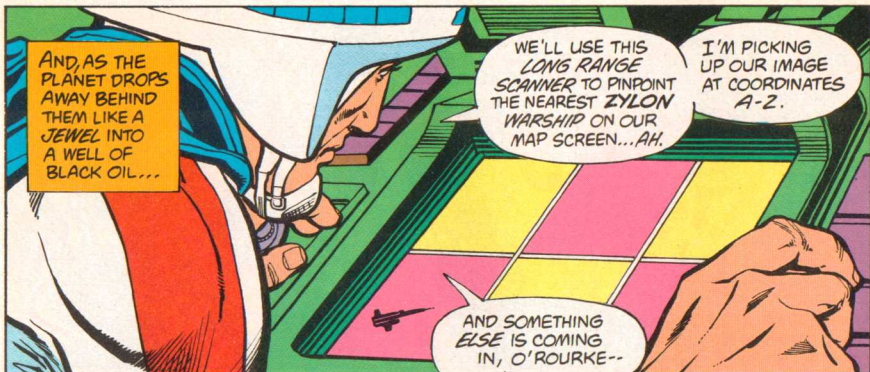
BAROOM!

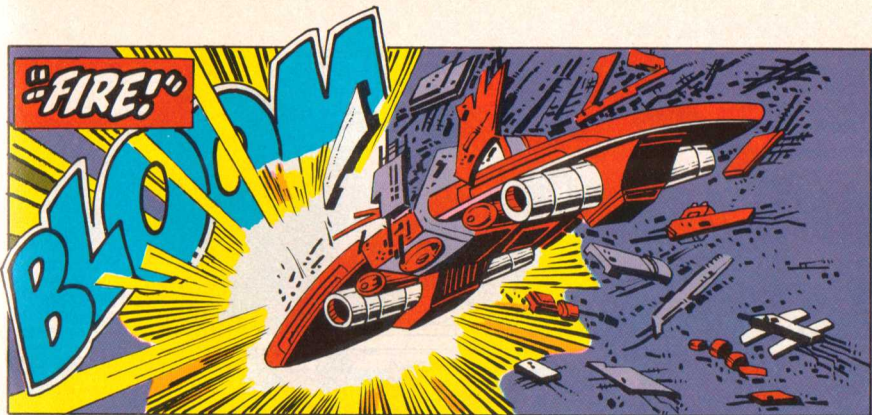
ALL RIGHT,
LYDIA, THAT'S A
LIFT-OFF!

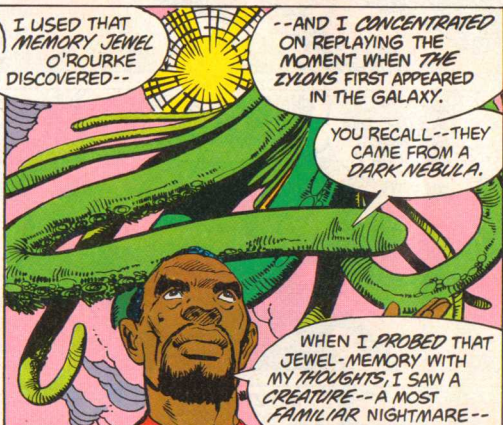
WE'LL REMAIN IN
CONTACT WITH THE
REST OF YOU ABOARD
SCANNER ONE VIA
THE ATARI 8000--

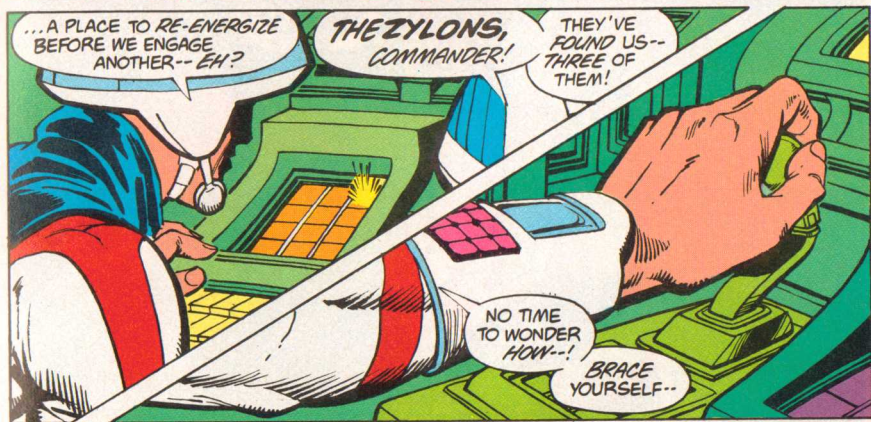
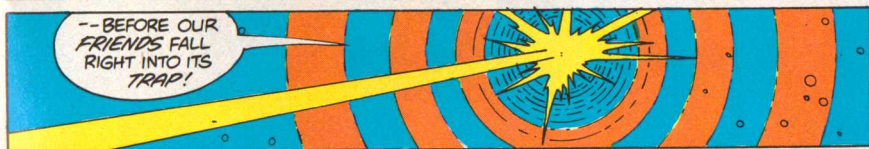
--BUT RIGHT NOW,
WE'RE PREPARING TO
JUMP INTO
HYPERDRIVE!

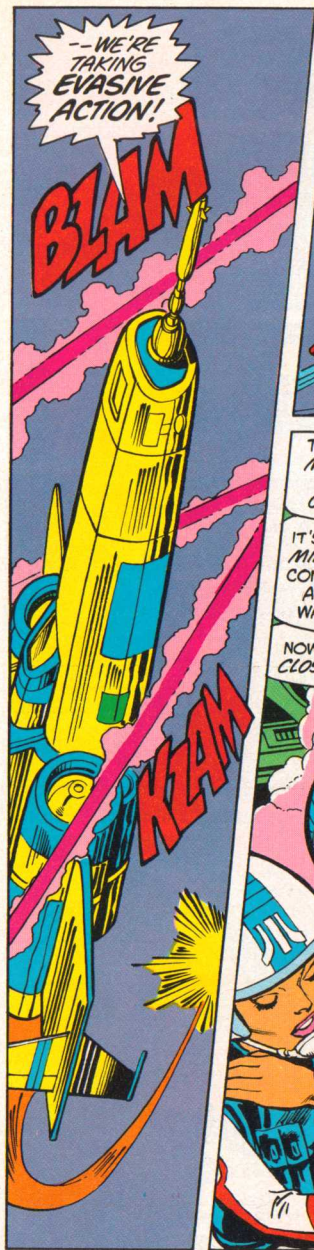
ROGER,
COMMANDER.
GOOD
HUNTING!







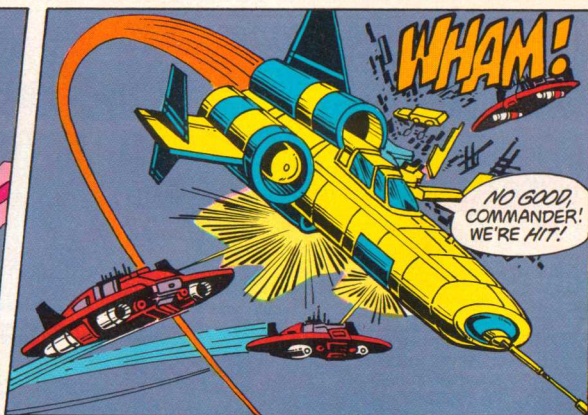




--WE'RE
TAKING
EVASIVE
ACTION!

BLAM

KZAM



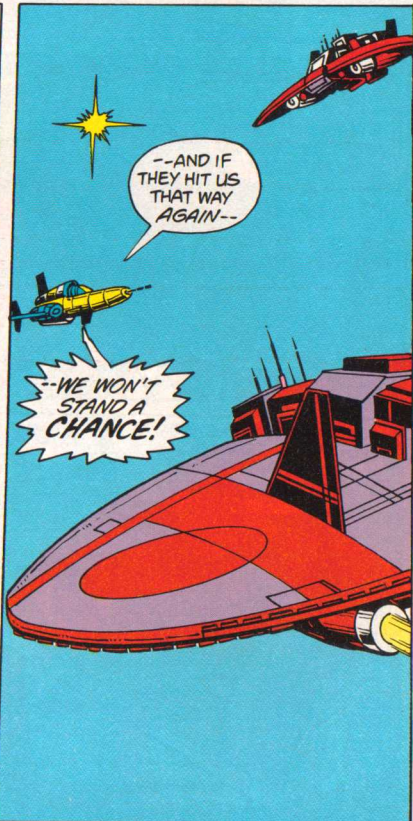
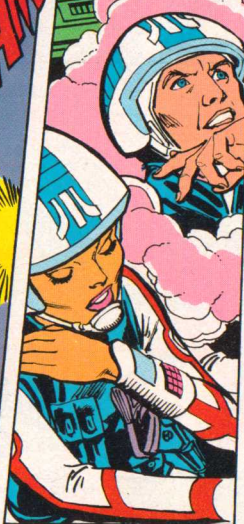
WHAM!

NO GOOD,
COMMANDER!
WE'RE HIT!

THE WAY THEY
MANEUVERED--
IN TOTAL
COORDINATION!

IT'S AS IF ONE
MIND WERE
CONTROLLING
ALL THREE
WARSHIPS!

NOW THEY'RE
CLOSING IN--



--AND IF
THEY HIT US
THAT WAY
AGAIN--

--WE WON'T
STAND A
CHANCE!

SPACE OUTSIDE
SPACE, TIME
OUTSIDE TIME:

THIS IS THE INTERDIMENSIONAL LIMBO KNOWN
AS THE MULTIVERSE AND THROUGH THIS UN-
REALITY SCANNER ONE PLUNGES LIKE A DOLPHIN
THROUGH TROUBLED WATERS...



I'VE RECHECKED THE PLAN
TWICE WITH OUR ATARI
8000 COMPUTER, SINGH.

YOU HEARD
THE DOCTOR,
MOHANDAS.

HURRY.

IT'S OUR
ONLY
HOPE.

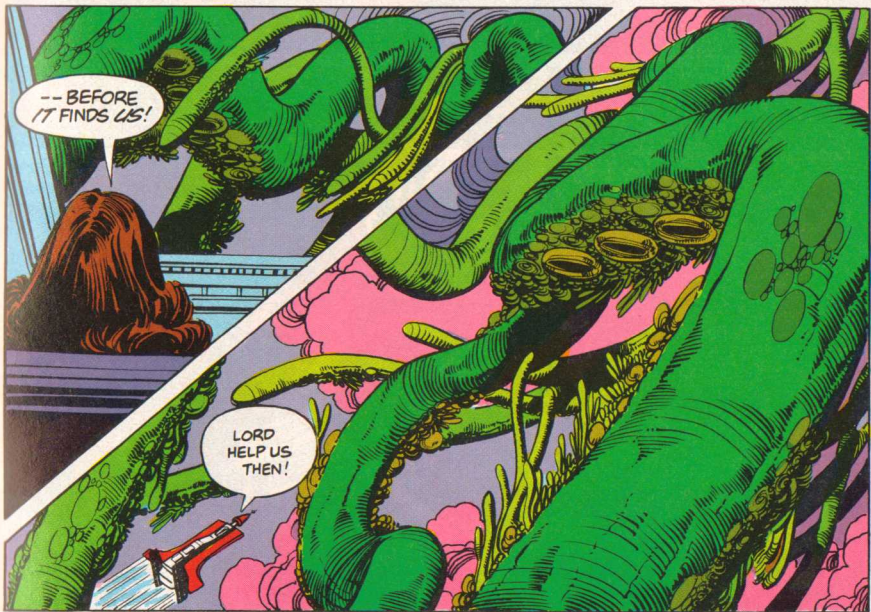


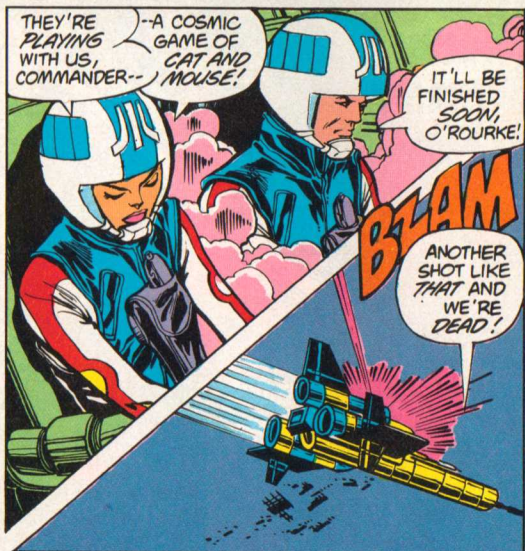
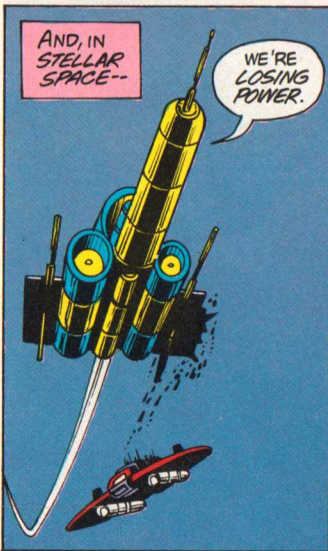
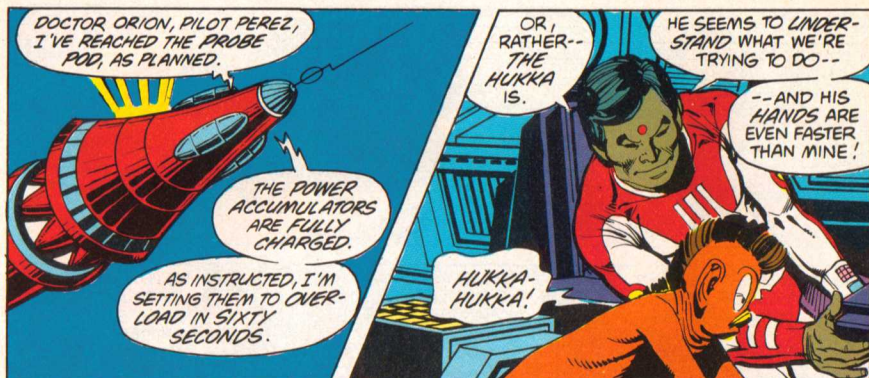
WE'VE FOUND THE
DARK DESTROYER,
AND IT'S ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME--

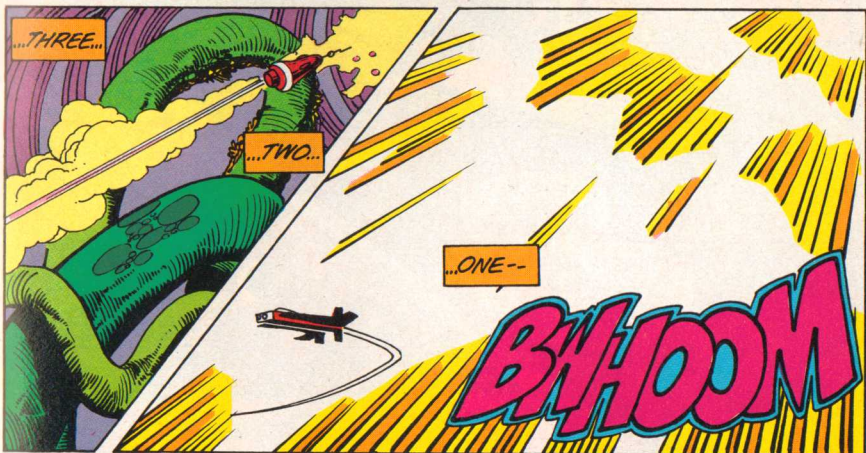
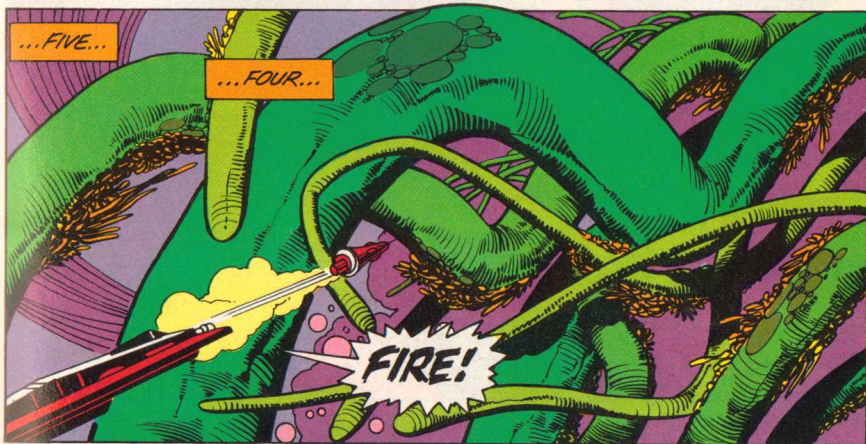


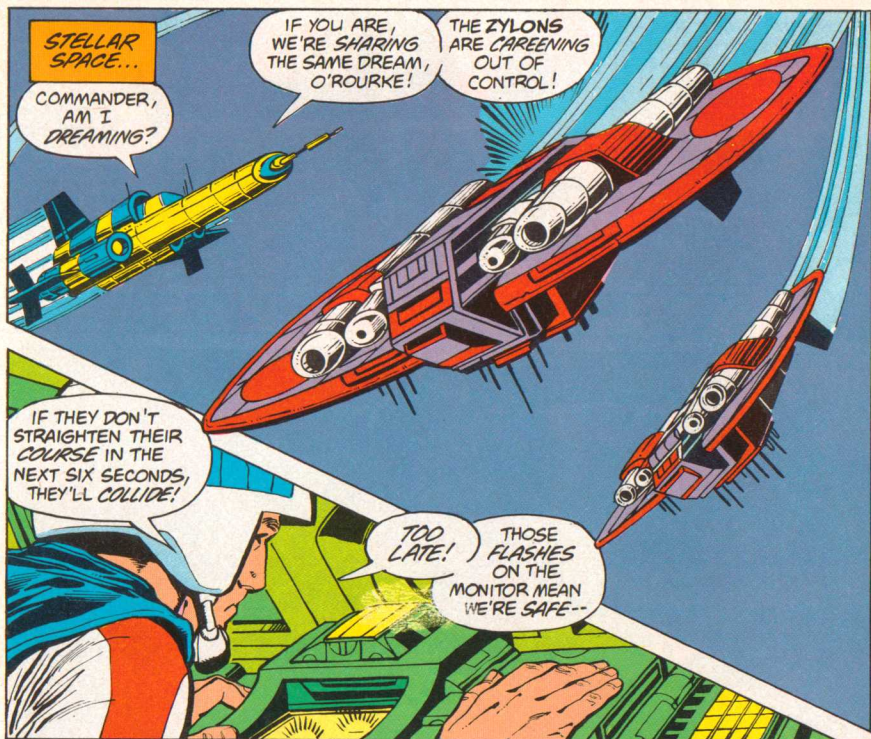
--BEFORE
IT FINDS US!

LORD
HELP US
THEN!









STELLAR
SPACE...

COMMANDER,
AM I
DREAMING?

IF YOU ARE,
WE'RE SHARING
THE SAME DREAM,
O'ROURKE!

THE ZYLONS
ARE CAREENING
OUT OF
CONTROL!

IF THEY DON'T
STRAIGHTEN THEIR
COURSE IN THE
NEXT SIX SECONDS,
THEY'LL COLLIDE!

TOO
LATE!

THOSE
FLASHES
ON THE
MONITOR MEAN
WE'RE SAFE--

--BUT HOW AND
WHY, I COULDN'T
BEGIN TO GUESS!

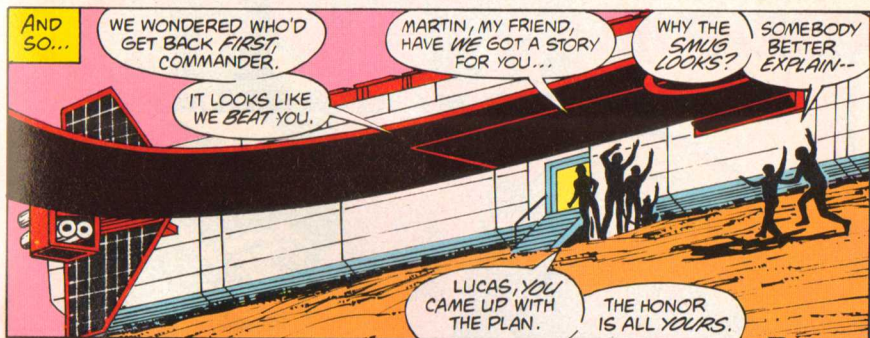
WE WERE
LUCKY,
O'ROURKE.

AYE, THAT
WE WERE,
COMMANDER.

IT WAS A MADNESS
THAT CLAIMED US,
A LUST FOR
VENGEANCE!

I THINK
WE'VE LEARNED
OUR LESSON,
O'ROURKE.

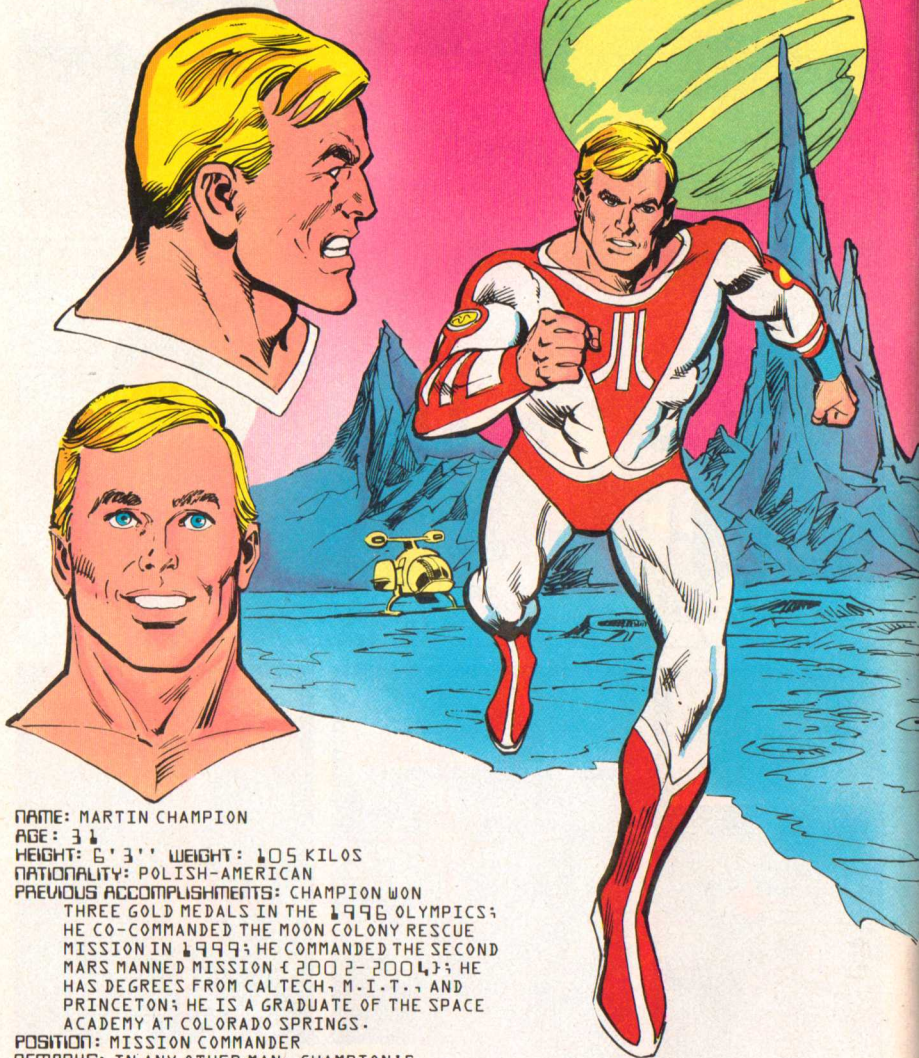
NOBODY
EVER WINS
AT WAR.



THE ATARI FORCE WILL RETURN--
IN "PHOENIX," COMING SOON!

ATARI FORCE **FACT FILE:**

#1 COMMANDER MARTIN CHAMPION



NAME: MARTIN CHAMPION

AGE: 31

HEIGHT: 6'3" **WEIGHT:** 105 KILOS

NATIONALITY: POLISH-AMERICAN

PREVIOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: CHAMPION WON

THREE GOLD MEDALS IN THE 1996 OLYMPICS; HE CO-COMMANDED THE MOON COLONY RESCUE MISSION IN 1999; HE COMMANDED THE SECOND MARS MANNED MISSION (2002-2004); HE HAS DEGREES FROM CALTECH, M.I.T., AND PRINCETON; HE IS A GRADUATE OF THE SPACE ACADEMY AT COLORADO SPRINGS.

POSITION: MISSION COMMANDER

REMARKS: IN ANY OTHER MAN, CHAMPION'S

ACCOMPLISHMENTS MIGHT HAVE RESULTED IN THE CREATION OF AN OVERBEARING EGO; CHAMPION REMAINS REMARKABLY UNAFFECTED, AND AT TIMES SEEMS ALMOST BOYISH; YET HIS COOL, CONFIDENT MANNER MAKES HIM A PERFECT LEADER, AND INSPIRES THE LOYALTY OF HIS FELLOW EXPLORERS...

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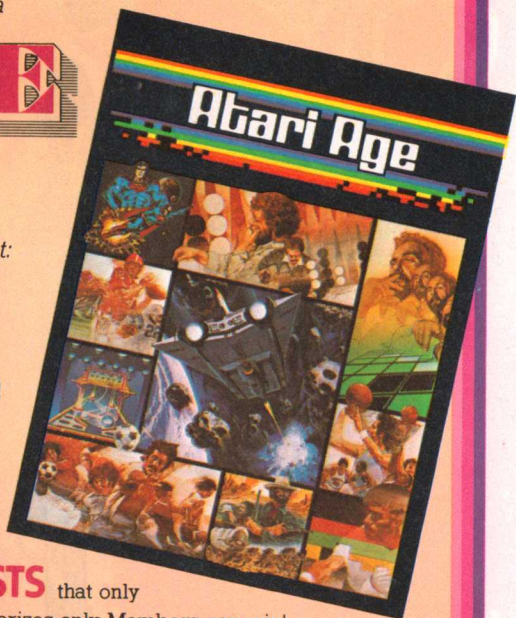
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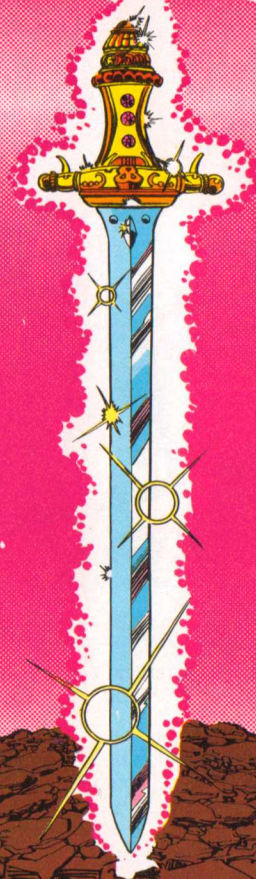
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